

THE Woefull and Lamen-

table wast and spoile done by a
suddaine Fire in S. Edmonds-bury
in *Suffolke*, on Munday the tenth of
Aprill. 1608



L O N D O N

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1608





THE
Woefull and lamentable waste
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There is no impossitiō of afflicti-
on laide vpon mā:kind by y^e pow-
erful hād of God, but it is ei-
ther to draw vs vnto him, & to
teach vs to bend all our intend-
mēt^s to celestial happines, or to
withdraw vs from the world,
and to forswear vs not to rely
our hopes vpon her slippery tearmes: For what
shal we get by being willing customers vnto her, but
falle ware suitable to the shop of such a Merchant: her
traffick is but toile, her wealth trash, and her gaine

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mischiefe: If we consider where we are, what state we stand in, The daungers that hang ouer vs, and our ordinary wantes, and amisses: Wee shall finde our whole life so necessarily ioynd with sorrow, that we ought rather delight (and take pleasure) in Gods louing chastisements, and admonitions, then any way mormure and grudge at our crosses, or tribulations: Consider (saith Saint Bernarde) From whom thou comest, and blush whether thou goest, and feare where thou liest, and lament. Wee are begotten in uncleawenes, nourished in darkenes, and brought forth with throbbs, and throwes. Our Infancie is but a dreame, our yonth but madnesse, our manheod a combat, our age a sicknes, our whole life misery, and our death horror.

If we haue any thing that doth delight vs, it is in so many hazards, that the feare of loosing it, is more then the ioy of enioying it. If we haue any thing that doth annoy vs, the agreeuance therof encreaseth, with the doubt of as euill, or worse, that may straight ensue after it: which way can wee cast our eyes, but that we shall finde cause of complaint and heavinesse? These are forcible motives to perswade vs to suffer our afflictions with patience.

If wee looke up towards heauen, from thence we are banished: If we looke towards earth, That is our prison: On the right hand we haue Vertue, whose steps we haue not followed: On the left hand we haue Vice, whose course we haue pursued: Before vs we haue our death, ready to denounce vs: behinde vs, our wicked

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twicked life, ready to accuse vs: And on euery side,
dayly and deadly aduersaries, ready to entrap vs.

Oh how much then are worldlings deceived, that
walke in magnis & mirabilibus super se: in greate
things and meruailes aboue them selues: that re-
ioyce in the time of weeping, that make this life
their happines, and their pallace of pleasure: that e-
scue afflictions to be dishonorable, that think to goe
to heauen, by the wide way, y only leadeth to perdition.
Afflictions are louing and fatherly corrections to
winne vs to heauen, The path that goeth thither is
narrow, rough, & fully wearisome, & trying ascents
their way therfore is wrong, their error grosse, and
their ruine is assured, y after the steps of many that
haue patiently trode the waye to heauen by crosses &
tribulations, will not learne to settle their footing.

The contentions of this life, haue nothing cer-
taine, but true miserie, rough stormes, solace full of
sadnesse, and hopes full of hazard: they are like faire
weather in winter, nothing durable, like a calme in
the Sea, alwayes vncertaine: like the Readinesse
of the Moone, y is euery in changing: they resemble
the Cockatrice egge, faire without & foule within:
Nabuchodonozors Image, that had the face and
head of gold, but earthen and brittle frete: Or the
sweete Riuier that runneth into the salt Sea.

Seeing therfore that crosses and afflictions or a-
ny externall calamities, are but meanes to remem-
ber vs of our place, state, & danger, and but seedes
of comfort, to such as emoye them, how soeuer they

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seeme heere couered and corrupted in earth, and tedious to mans vndergoing, let vs solace our selues in hope of a ioyfull conclusion.

Wee are here but Pilgrimes, we haue no Citty of abode, but hope for a sature place of rest. If our way should be altogether beset with pleasures and delights, wee should easily be hindered in our iourney towards heauen, being drawne and withheld, with the view and desire of those allurements. Therefore God hath layed in the way of througfare, some tedious and distersfull oppositions to put vs in minde of our heauenly repose, and to teach vs to runne ouer the cares of this life with patience. God hath his secret lone to man-kinde, and his seuerall punishments for sinne, which hee often times doth easily inflict vpon vs to drawe vs to amendment.

Those creatures which in the first parliament of our creation, were appointed to be our comforts, are many times sent forth with sandy rods to scourge vs, to correct vs, nay to drawe blood of vs for our sinnes. There is yet a meanes to be made for our reconciliation: Sonne and heire apparant to the King of heauen, mediats betweene his Father and vs, to make our peace with him: it may easily be effected, if we shake off and abandon those vile enozmities, and base company of sinnes, that attainte euery one of vs. If wee doe not, hee will assuredly turne his threatinings into blowes, and his louing mercy into seuerer Justice: and those consuming flames, which

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which hee hath of late but scattered in diuers partes of this Kingdome: hee will at one time, and in one place, cast all together, and make of the world one great bone-fire and that on a sodaine, so; not making right vse of his diuers fatherly and gentle admonitions.

Amongst which, this affliction of Fire, that befell to the Towne of S. Edmonf. burie in Suffolke, deserves with all pittie to be pittied, and to be reckoned (in the remembrance of many other) as an imposition of calamitie laid vpon that place by the hand and power of God so; their secret sins and offences. The beginning of which fire, as it was by the remisse and sleepe negligence of a Seruant, so did it proue to be of verie dismall, and disasther consequence. It was such as none could beholde it without trembling, neither can any beare it, and not shed teares in abundance, to see the miseries that were, kindled by it.

It hapned on Sunday the tenth of Aprill, betwene eight and nine of the clock in the morning, without the east gate of the same Towne, in a place called East-gate street, in the house of one Randall a Spalster. And notwithstanding that at first it began halfe a mile from the Market place, yet was it carryed thither by the violence of the winde, where it did those severall hurts, as will not be made good in long time, no; without great summes of money. In describing which sad report, you shall behold the names of some that

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that are fallne into miserie by the same: As also the places where the chiefe hurts and ouerthrowes haue bene, with seuerall hot encounters, & some part of the spoiles.

The verie Market place, that was the beantie and ornament of the whole towne, was the pyncepal and chiefeest part y^e felt the furie of this fierie assault. That place y^e before was had in such admiration for y^e godly houses & y^e manner of their stately buildings, was by this vntimely accident vtterly defaced, & made a rude continent of heapes of stones and peeces, of Timber, that but newly fell from those late burnt houses. The Ware-houses and Bellars about the Market place, wherein were great store of Fish, salt, Sugar, Spices, and many other comodities of great value, were by this fire all turned into Ashes, & now serue for nothing but refuse.

This fire brought to the Market place by the tempest of winde, hath blowne a great number vpon the Rocks, of such pouertie and Miserie, that the losse that the towne hath receiued by the same, is thought not able to be made good againe, vnlesse the eye of compassion extend it selfe to the largest compasse and limits of this Land in her behalfe. The walles, Fences, and hedges within the towne, are all laide leuell to the ground, by this furious inuader, who no sooner entered, but he was inflamed with pride, and got into the highest and chiefeest places, where he encountered with the stoutest and tallest of them, and neuer ceased till he brought them as lowe as earth.

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The lamentable shriekes of women, the cries of poore children, the astonishment, and wilde lookes of all men at this sudden and untimely accident, no man can truly expresse: the danger that this terrible tempest brought with it, wrought unspeakeable feare in the hearts of all that were neere vnto it; but the sudden and strange cruelty of the same, bred the greater terrour and amazement: men severally employed, and going about their ordinary occasions of business, were compelled (seeing so dreadfull an enemy approaching) to sie backe to their houses, yet before they could enter, death stood at the doores ready to receiue them.

Whole Cowe-mowes and Hay-mowes, (the one reserved for mans food, the other for sustenance of cattell) were all quite consumed by this merciless aduersary. The losses whereof were so great, and innumerable, as none knowes the grieve thereof, for the present, but the owners of them.

But to descend from the generall spoyle (which was great) to some particular losses (which were as grievous.) Let vs behold the lamentation of M. Pinner a Grocer, dwelling in S. Edmunds-bury aforesaid, and in the market place, in the parish of Saint Iames, (where the most hurt was done) with the complaints and bewailings, which himselfe, his wife, and children put out for that misery which the cruelty of this fire hath exercised upon them: whereby he lost not onely all that substance that was his owne, but also those wares which he had of other mens; so that he is doubly vndone: this fire shewed his glistering triumphs in deuouring his goods, plate, and money, and in swallowing and eating up a newe built house to the ground; that but lately before cost him foure or five hundred pounds the erecting.

He that the day before was esteemed a man (at the least) worth two or three thousand pounds, was by this untimely accident utterly vndone, his goods being quite destroyed and consumed, himselfe (in his estate) was made lesse worth then nothing. They that before were wont to comfort the distressed,

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fed, and to feed their neighbours, and other inhabitants with bread, are by this in danger to perish for want of reliefe, being now ready to beg bread themselves.

Many people that lost their goods, and got from the peril of the fire; escaping with their liues, are since fallen sicke with the very feare, and suddaine fright of it, and remaine in great danger and doubt of recovery: the fire hauing destroyed all meanes that should comfort them in this their distresse.

The lead of the market-crosse & the crosse it selfe was utterly ruinate & consumed to the ground by the violent blow of this hot encounter. Here might you see men, women, & children in great multitudes, come crying out for safety, and ready to runne out of their wits: seeing that which maintayned their liues spoiled before their faices; and yet glad to forsake all that they haue in the world, and to shift for their poore liues: many were sharers in this one ill bargaine, yet in the end all losers. So furious & fiery was this sharpe assault, that euen that which many men had brought into the streetes out of their houses, in hope to be saued, was lost & consumed in the flames. Many of the inhabitants, before this unhappy accident fell vpon them, were of good abilitie; and with that substance which God (thzough their honest endenours) had bestowed vpon them, they were charitable relieuers of their poore neighbours within the towne; but now euen those to whom they haue formerly giuen bread, are ready to be solicited in the like extremity of want by them (if they had it) for reliefe: and now their cases being made all alike by this tyrannous enemy of the world, and vnmercifull destroyer of all things, being all depriued of meanes, they are all in like danger to starue, vnles the hands of Gods people be opened in their comfort.

But to digresse a little, to passe from Preambles to the thing indeed, from gentle warnings to the penalty it selfe. This scourge of sin; this forementioned misery is but a verie smal re-
semblance in respect of y^e which is to come: if we neglect to make
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right vse thereof to the behoofe of our soules : *Initium autem dolorum hac* : These are but a beginning of griefes. These strange euents are but prognostications of worse to come, as a smoke in respect of a moze terrible ensuing fire, and like a mustering of souldiers befoze the sad battell. Let therefore these afflictions and some other late crosses and calamities (the feeling whercof is yet fresh in our memoizies) pzeuaile with vs, not to slumber out our time in careless security, but to win grace & fauour at Gods hands by amendmēt of our liues. For if there be a neglect of this, what will the paines be that these beginnings portend : How rigorous will that sentence be, that hath to fearefull remonstrances befoze the iudgement?

But not to enlarge my selfe in this. Let vs looke backe to the misery and calamity that hath also befallen to M^r. Cox a Draper, dwelling both in the same towne and parish, whose house the flame of this fire swallowed with insatiable iawes, and consumed into ashes: burning al his goods and household-stuffe, and leauing nothing to put bread into the mouthes of him, his wife, and childzen, saue onely a little parne, of small account of value, which he had, and was pzeferred by great chance in a warehouse he had in Kotten-row, a place not farre from the market place aforesaid.

All hands laid about them in this firy conflict (as if that enemies had bene marching to besiege the Towne) to saue and trusse by what they could, and be gone : but behold how swift is mischæse, when God diuines it befoze him to the punishment of our sinnes : all were labouring to beare away some of their goods, but befoze their burthens could be taken vp, they were compelled to forsake them, & to loke about for the safeguard of their liues, leauing the rest to the mercy of the fire.

The desolate effects that this cruell Element wrought in Saint Edmunds-bury aforesaid, is able to thawe the most frozen heart, and to worke a relenting in the most obdurate spirit that is. Whose fury was so vehement, that from the

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Monday it began, till the Wednesday after, the rage thereof could not be fully extinguished, nor could it bee thoroughly quenched, albeit all the welles and poudes about the towne, were drawne by to that purpose. This heat as it consumed two hundred dwelling houses, and upwardes in the same towne, with their household-stuffe, and barnes with much Coyne vntyethed in them, with many thousand quarters of wheat, barley, and rie, thyethed and laide vppe in Chambers, Horses in the the stable, Laine, Swine, and other Cattel: so did the rage thereof continue to adde græfe and sorrow to a place that of it selfe ministreth nothing but matter of sorrow, namely the Prison of the same towne, which in short space (the prisoners for the time being remoued) by the merciles iudgement of fire was condemned to be burned, and quite consumed into ashes. Many inhabitants are impouersished by it, & most of them vnbone for euer: many thousandes of pounds cannot make good the losses & spoiles that this towne hath receiued hereby. The misery of this place is matchles, the losses of the people numberles, & their cares, cureles: for what a strange alteration may it be thought to them, y were wont to succor & harbor others in distresse, to be now left succourles, & made destitute of harbour themselves, by the violent blowe of this storme: and euen in a moment of time to be deiet and throwne downe from the toppe of riches and well-fare, to the most lowe degrees and conditions of pouerty, and sorrowe: and in stead of choise and delicate diet; of faire dwellings, and soft lodging, to haue now no foode at all; no certaine dwelling, but the miery frame of this wild world to walke in: and no better lodging then the bare ground? This Towne so famous before for beautie and for statelines of building, is now vntimely defaced, & ouerthrowne by this sodaine misfortune, and deserues no lesse to be pitied and relieued, then that affliction did, which the citty of Cannas, & the adioyning places thereof felt so grieuously, that all the houses of the same being couered and oppressed with heaps of burning ashes, the Romans

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mans (in very pity of their estates) were contented to release them tenne peeres tribute, to repaire the inestimable damages of one such irruption. I pray God that the inhabitants of this distressed place may but finde (amongst vs) parte of the like comforte and feeling compassion in this so sad extremity.

To this cruell wild fire Cozne that so rained in the houses, and wrought such lamentable spoils to this poore Towne, may be added another casualtie and calamitie that did lay hold vpon a carte, comming loaden to the Market with Cozne, and increased the sorrow of her owner, by the rage of the flames, which were no sooner carried to her by the violence of the wind, but she was quite consumed, and the Cozne burned, and two or thre of her hoxses turned into ashes, to the great sorrow of such as saw it, and could not helpe it, and the ineffable discomfort of many, that might haue bene relieved by it.

The diligent and industrious care of the Iustices of the peace, that were there at that time assembled at the quarter Sessions, and of many others met there together by those occasions, deserues not to passe vnremembred: who by their examples stirred by many (as much as in them lay) to vse their best meanes to appease this heate; which notwithstanding continued so strong in the assault, that it consumed, as is aforesaid, two hundred and odd dwelling houses: and soz all that was or could be done, it is thought and repozted from the mouths of very sufficient and iudicious persons, that an hundred thousand pounds will not make good the losses that this towne of S. Edmunds-bury hath receiued by this fire, nor recover it to the former estate: which besides the wacke of houses that by this calamity of fire were laid leuell with the ground, lost also her substance and riches of cozne, money, gold, plate, wares, &c. of infinite value and measure, where with the same was formerly stozed, to the unrecoverable vndoing of the owners thereof, and of their wiues and children, who by this means are left quite destitute of means euen to maintaine their wretched bodies with food.

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And now because the consideration of that which our sins haue deserued, is a forcible motiue to digest with patience, these or any crosses or miseries that befall vnto vs: let vs call to minde what God might further haue laide vpon vs, besides this, or our late afflictions of plague, fires, waters, frost, &c. and yet not onely not exceeded the boild of his iustice, but haue still shewed himselfe of infinite mercy: for it is a generall Axiome, and an approued verity, ratified by the common consent of all Diuines: That as God doth reward aboue our deserts, and in his eternall recompence, farre exceedeth the value of any woorkes we can doe; so on the other side doth he chastise farre vnderneath the rate of our misdeedes: and (his infinite iustice considered) his greatest punishment amounteth not to the exceeding heynousnes of the least of our sinnes. And seeing the iniuries that we daily offer to so infinite a Maiesty, in so opprobrious and despightfull manner, (being so farre inferior, and so highly beholding vnto him) are so many in number, so grieuous in qualitie, and so ordinary in experience with all men, though God should double and treble all punishments of sinne, and lay them on sinners backs for their seuerall offences, yet might he iustly double them a new, and as often as he thought good, without doing any iniury to the offendours, yea, and punishing far lesse then their deserts.

Let vs not then thinke much, if wee, whose offences are most grieuous, suffer a few scourges and afflictions, but rather account them as easie messengers to call vs homewards, and as motiues to draw vs to amendment: that euery man particularly descending into himselfe, may learne to strike saile to his sinnes, and put his soule into the safe harbour of Penitence, lest remayning still in the scope of wicked winds and weather, some unexpected gulls and suddaine storme dash him vpon the rocke of eternall ruine. God grant there ensue not a second affliction woorse then this, by forgetfulness and careless security.

F I N I S.



